

Oregon Health Authority : COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions : Diseases A to Z : State of Oregon

Topic	Question	Answer
Testing	People don't need the state's approval to get a test, right? Only if they're going to try and get a test through the State Lab?	Correct. Physicians who have hospitalized patients with viral pneumonia can submit that test online and don't need any approval from Public Health. Submitting a form and answering the clinical questions is enough. For clinicians ordering commercial tests in their office based on their clinical judgment, they do not need to contact Public Health. We do not need to give them approval. The provider will get the results to give to the patient and OHA will receive those results as well so we can assist in investigations.
Testing	What is a commercial laboratory test?	A commercial laboratory test means a test done by a commercial lab like LabCorp and Quest. There are national labs that support a lot of health systems, outpatient clinics and doctors' offices.
Testing	What if I feel like I've been exposed but don't need to see a healthcare provider or get tested?	If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, and you get fever, cough or trouble breathing, stay away from other people, so you don't get them sick. Consult with your doctor or a clinic by phone for instructions.
Testing	How long does it take to get test results?	Results are generally available within 3 to 4 days. Your healthcare provider may ask you to isolate yourself during this time, to limit possible spread of the virus.

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Testing	How much does the test cost?	<p>Most health insurers in Oregon have agreed to waive co-pays, co-insurance and deductibles for: COVID-19 testing An in-network provider office visit or a visit to an in-network urgent care center to be tested for COVID-19 An emergency room visit to be tested for COVID-19 Immunization for COVID-19, should it become available Regular terms of insurance such as co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles will still apply for other parts of a visit to a healthcare provider. For more information, contact your health insurer and visit the Department of Consumer and Business Services website at: https://dfr.oregon.gov/insure/health/understand/Pages/coronavirus.aspx. Those who are uninsured should apply for Oregon Health Plan (OHP) coverage, which fully covers the cost of getting tested for COVID-19 if they need it. People can sign up here: https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/OHP/Pages/Apply.aspx. If people don't want to sign up for OHP, we encourage them to see a clinician through their county health clinic or through a federally qualified health clinic (FQHC). You can find a list of FQHCs in Oregon here: https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/HP-PCO/Documents/FQHCs.pdf.</p>
Testing	What is the difference between the roles of the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory and commercial laboratories?	<p>At this time, the role of OSPHL is to monitor geographic distribution and assess patients at high risk of infection or who might have exposed many others at high risk for serious disease. As a low-volume laboratory, OSPHL also bridges the gap between emergence of novel infections, such as COVID-19, and availability of testing through commercial laboratories. OSPHL also supports safety net clinics. Commercial laboratories now offer expanded capacity for clinicians to order COVID-19 testing at their discretion. In the coming days and weeks, local health systems will complete certification for their in-house laboratories and begin to offer COVID-19 testing, further expanding testing capacity. Collecting specimens for commercial lab testing can be done in the outpatient setting. This testing is based on clinical judgment and does not require public health approval. Clinic administrators may need to contact commercial labs to establish testing protocols for their clinics.</p>
Testing	How many tests are available?	<p>The actual number of tests on hand will vary. OSHPL currently has the capacity to conduct 80 tests per day. It may take more than one test per patient. The capacity of private labs is at least in the thousands, on a national basis, and expanding rapidly.</p>
Testing	How are test results tracked?	<p>The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory tracks the number of tests conducted within OSPHL and the results. Private labs report positive test results to the ordering provider as well as to public health.</p>
Testing	How are healthcare workers being protected?	<p>Workers collecting samples must wear personal protective equipment, which may include gowns, gloves, eye protection and masks. We are sharing guidance with healthcare workers and facilities to help them stay safe.</p>
Testing	What if I test positive?	<p>Your healthcare provider and public health staff will give you information about how to keep from spreading the virus to your family and friends. You will need to isolate yourself from other people for as long as your healthcare provider instructs. You will also need to avoid coughing on others and to wash your hands frequently, to protect them from infection.</p>

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Testing	If it's determined I need testing for COVID-19, what should I expect?	Testing for COVID-19 will likely involve your healthcare provider taking a sample on a swab through the nose. Read the flyer for information about testing in multiple languages. English Español / Spanish اللغة العربية / Arabic 简体中文 / Simplified Chinese Русский / Russian Af Soomaali / Somali Tiếng Việt / Vietnamese
Testing	Where can I get tested?	Contact your primary healthcare provider or a clinic. They can determine whether you need testing. Though hospitals may request lab testing for some high-risk patients, emergency rooms should not be considered a primary source for patient-requested testing.
Testing	Who should be tested?	Many people are interested in testing for COVID-19 out of concern for themselves and their loved ones. If you have trouble breathing or feel very ill, contact your healthcare provider or, in case of emergency, call 911. Healthcare providers may decide to have you first tested for other illnesses, like the flu, based on your possible exposure history and any other symptoms you might have. Individuals who feel very ill should seek appropriate care. If it is an emergency, call 911. If it is not an emergency but you feel sick enough to need a medical appointment, call your doctor's office. If you don't have a doctor, call 211 for a list of clinics near you. If necessary, visit your local urgent care center. Call before you go. If you have flu-like symptoms or have reason to think you might have COVID-19, let your healthcare provider know before you visit. This will help avoid exposing anyone else at the provider's facility.
Testing	Which labs can test for COVID-19?	The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) and commercial laboratories, such as LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics can currently test for COVID-19. Some local health systems will be able to test soon.
Testing	What are Oregon's testing priorities for COVID-19?	Public health goals for COVID-19 testing are: To understand the geographic spread of the virus within Oregon To identify groups at highest risk for severe disease To protect those at highest risk To understand trends for the infection in Oregon To these ends, priorities for testing for COVID-19, either at the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory or at other laboratories, are: Symptomatic residents or inmates in long-term-care facilities, corrections and other high-risk congregate settings; and workers and staff in these facilities, and workers in critical infrastructure. (We expect that healthcare and other employers will take responsibility for their own staff: that they do not work while sick; and if they have exposed others while ill with COVID-like symptoms, that testing will be arranged by the employer.) Persons hospitalized with otherwise unexplained, apparently viral, pneumonia; and unattended deaths. Symptomatic individuals identified by local and tribal public health authorities who pose risk to vulnerable populations, should they prove to have COVID-19. Limited testing of symptomatic outpatients, through our current "Sentinel Provider" surveillance system (for influenza-like illness). We require Oregon laboratories, and ask out-of-state reference laboratories, to report both positive and negative test results, so that we can calculate percentage positive in various settings and among various demographic groups.